

CITYSTYLE

Atlantic Insight

March 1984

2351

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**Sharing: Metro's boom
in co-op home ownership**

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Homes for two (or three or four)

Shared home ownership is becoming a popular choice in Metro. But you should know what you're getting into

By Pat Lotz

When Winifred Desjardins, a federal government information officer, finally realized that her landlord was not going to do anything about the deteriorating state of the apartment she rented in central Halifax, she had two options: "Fix it up myself and add to the landlord's equity or move." She didn't want to live in a high-rise, and there seemed to be no comfortable flats available. "I decided to look into the possibilities of buying. I told the real estate agent that I had X number of dollars for a down payment, and I wanted to see what I could get for that amount."

Not very much, as it turned out.

"That's when I thought of Charlie. We sat next to each other in Grade 6 back in Antigonish, and we'd recently met up again. I knew he was thinking about buying a place, so I thought, Why not share a duplex?"

"I'd been looking around, and I realized there was no way I could afford to buy a house," says Charlie Macdonald, an engineer with the provincial Department of Transport. He was then living on the eighth floor of a high-rise overlooking the Halifax Commons, and "I was about ready to come down to ground level."

Desjardins liked the duplex on Hunter Street

as soon as the agent showed it to her. "It was the wooden doors that really attracted her," Macdonald says, with a chuckle. But it had other advantages: Structural soundness, plenty of room, a backyard. Desjardins moved into the upper unit last October and Macdonald moved into the lower unit a month later. They had no trouble assuming the mortgage, which they pay in proportion to the amount of the down payment each made.

"We have a temporary agreement drawn up and witnessed, covering things like how costs are to be divided and what happens if one of us wants to sell," explains Macdonald, "but we plan to get a formal one drawn up by a lawyer, after we've had a chance to see what kind of issues might crop up." "You can't dot all the i's and cross all the t's before you have a chance to see how things go," Desjardins adds. Chores such as snow shoveling and leaf-raking are shared. Macdonald looks after the finances, and Desjardins looks after getting estimates or arranging for repairmen.

Wilson Fitt, a Halifax lawyer specializing in real estate, notes that co-ownership arrangements are becoming more common. "This type of arrangement can be attractive because it allows a person to get out of the rental market and into home ownership with only half of the cost of purchasing a property solely."

It's an arrangement that works well for Alvin Comiter, who, unlike Desjardins, found his house first and then went looking for two partners to share it. "When I saw this place, I really wanted it," he says of the tall, elegant stone building dating back to 1870. "Most of the lovely old houses in Halifax are too big for one person to buy," complains Comiter, who teaches photography at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. The building was already divided into three units, but the idea of living in one and renting the other two did

not appeal to him, "even if I could have afforded the down payment." The first two people he found to share backed out, but just when he thought he would lose the building, he was introduced to Peter Schwenger at a party. Schwenger, who teaches English at Mount Saint Vincent University, was looking for a single house to buy but agreed to look at the Queen Street house. "As soon as I saw the house, I felt it was the right place for me," Schwenger says. "I went home and, jokingly, asked a girl who lived in the same building if she wanted to buy a flat." As it happened, Lynda Campbell, a speech pathologist, had been looking for a house to buy. She, too, made up her mind as soon as she saw the place.

lawyer. It made us look like terrible people." There are clauses covering rights and obligations, financial management, sharing of maintenance. "There's also a clause that we meet once a month," Campbell points out, "but we don't. We tend to get together when there's something to discuss."

One of the many things they like about the co-ownership arrangement, since they all travel in their jobs, is that there's always someone around to keep an eye on things. A clause in the contract ensures that each person has a key to all three units. Cost sharing is another plus. Soon after they moved in, they discovered that they had to replace the roof and waterproof the foundations.



Macdonald and Desjardins: Good will and a good contract

"The thing that really sold me on the place was the fenced-in backyard. It meant I could get a dog right away."

Comiter had already laid claim to the smallest unit. Schwenger preferred the main floor where the previous owners had lived. "It has a slightly theatrical style," he says, "and I'm a rather theatrical person." Although the top floor needed work, Campbell liked it for its spaciousness and the deck.

They moved in July, 1981.

One of the first tasks was to draw up an agreement. "We considered every conceivable appalling possibility," Schwenger explains. "In fact, I was embarrassed when we took it to the

"If I were in a single-family house," Comiter points out, "the roof and the foundation work would have cost the same. Split three ways, it's easier to bear." As a first-time home-buyer, Campbell likes the confidence that having two others around gives her.

Betty Ann Lloyd, a CBC associate producer, feels the co-ownership option is particularly viable for women on their own, or heading one-parent families, many of whom would like the convenience of living on the peninsula, "but have a very hard time finding affordable housing." In February, Lloyd and another woman bought a four-unit building in the North End. Ownership is

split 50/50 although Lloyd put down the larger portion of the down payment. She and her son live in one unit on the top floor and rent the other unit; her friend lives in a unit on the ground floor and rents the other. "We have a very strict, legal contract," Lloyd says, and they plan to have monthly meetings to ensure that everything runs smoothly. Since both women have a similar outlook on life, Lloyd isn't expecting problems.

Problems do seem to crop up when co-owners meet through the seller or realtor rather than through friendship or a mutual acquaintance. Joan Fuller, herself a real estate agent, had two main concerns when she bought into a three-unit building on Cambridge Street: The financial liability and whether she would be able to get along with two strangers. As it turned out, there were problems. One person wanted to do a lot of renovations, another nagged about maintenance and "we had a young baby who cried, and the soundproofing was not very good." The solution? "We moved. I was very relieved to get out of it into a single-family house." They sold their unit to a friend of one of the co-owners. "That kind of arrangement works much better if you know each other to start with," she says.

Non-compatibility was not the problem for Bill Naftel, Susan Markham and Mark DeWolf when they moved into the Sir Sandford Fleming House on Brunswick Street in 1976 even though they had never met before. The house, built in 1864 and for many years a rooming house, was still being renovated when they paid their deposits and moved in.

The final sale was to go through when all the work (including a fourth unit) was completed. By 1979, the fourth unit was still not finished and costs were rising. "It got too rich for my blood," Naftel says. Despite the experience, the three of them were still sold on the idea of co-ownership, "so

we looked around for something on a more modest scale."

Naftel, Markham and DeWolf found a Fifties triplex in the North End, with a splendid view of Halifax harbor. It was in good condition and needed only exterior painting. They decided to use the home ownership corporation type of legal structure. Ownership of a block of shares in the corporation entitles them to occupy their individual units and use the common elements. A year after they moved in, Markham sold her shares to James Eayrs.

The bylaws of the corporation set out regulations for all aspects of ownership, occupation and maintenance of the building. They have regular monthly meetings and an annual meeting and keep minutes for them all. Naftel, who works as senior historian at Parks Canada, is pleased with the success of their second attempt at co-ownership. "It's nice to have a small group of people sharing. We don't live in each other's pockets, but we do socialize."

The home-ownership corporation, also referred to as an equity co-op (in contrast with a non-equity or non-profit co-op, in which the tenants have no equity in their units), is a legal concept usually used for buildings with four or more co-owners.

Barrinsmith House on the corner of Barrington and Smith streets has nine units. Pat and Sidney Langmaid were the first purchasers of a unit and "we went into the deal a lot less blindly than many of the others," Pat Langmaid says, "because we had looked at a similar arrangement on Morris Street." Some of the co-owners did not realize that areas like the backyard were common to all, and were not to be divided into nine sections. "Some of the people even came in against the advice of their lawyers," Langmaid says. "They saw it as a very inexpensive way of acquiring a home, and lawyer or not, they just wanted in."

Wilson Fitt does not try to prevent clients from buy-

ing into co-ownership arrangements, but he makes sure they understand what they're getting into. He points out that co-ownership is not the same as condominium ownership. The blanket mortgage held by a condominium corporation's mortgage covers only the common and structural elements, not each individual unit. A home-ownership corporation's mortgage covers everything, and a defaulting shareholder can cause foreclosure, if arrangements have not been made to cover the payments.

obstacle to resale, or a relative depression in price."

"It would be much easier if financial institutions would adjust to this form of home ownership," says Pat Langmaid, "and allow people to raise a mortgage on the shares." But Fitt does not foresee this happening under the present legal structure in Nova Scotia. "What you would have to get is a personal or business loan, using the shares in the home ownership corporation as collateral." Of course this would not be amortized over



Comiter (top left), Schwenger and Campbell like the fact that someone's always around to keep an eye on things

Then there's the potential problem of resale of a unit where equity is in the form of shares. As Fitt points out: "The equity is the difference between the blanket mortgage amount and the market value of the share. As time goes on, the mortgage balance will be reduced and, hopefully, the value of the share will be increased. This equity, as it increases, and the possible difficulty of a potential buyer finding personal financing for it may result in a substantial

a long period.

But people like Winifred Desjardins and Charlie Macdonald feel that the advantages of co-ownership outweigh the disadvantages, and that with good will and a good contract, major problems can be averted. "I'm paying less a month here for a two-bedroom apartment than I was for a one-bedroom before," says Macdonald. "And I've got an apartment," adds Desjardins, "that isn't falling down around me." **C**

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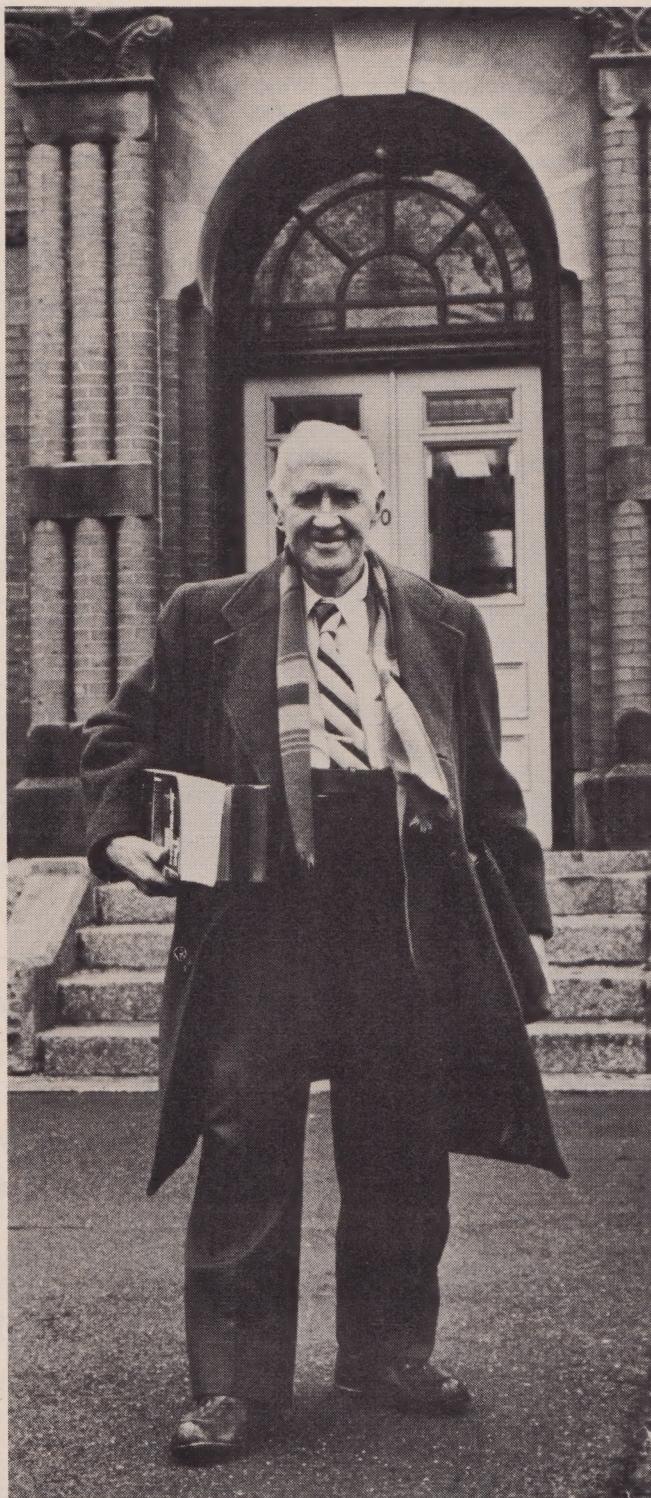
The second time around

More and more people in their 60s and 70s are discovering that age is no barrier to higher learning

Jim O'Connor isn't your average college student. Born in 1905, he left school in his early teens and went to work as an office boy in a Halifax shipping company. In the Thirties, he tried to get a degree by correspondence from Mount Allison University in Sackville, N.B. "I was doing pretty well with the courses," he recalls, but he was unable to take a year off to put in the year's residence that was then a requirement for a degree from Mount A. But after his second retirement (he retired from the federal government in 1969 and from the Halifax Co-operative Society in 1976), "I thought I'd start in again on some education." He took a BA at Saint Mary's University, choosing religious studies as his major, and after graduating in 1981, registered at the Atlantic School of Theology (AST) in the master's of theological studies program.

O'Connor's not unique in Metro. He is one of a small but increasing number of seniors who are picking up their formal education where they left off many years ago. Some are studying purely for the joy of learning; others, like Roberta Clark, an attractive, vivacious woman in her early 60s, have new career goals in mind.

Clark, who will graduate from Mount Saint Vincent University next month,



DAVID NICHOLS

Jim O'Connor: After two retirements he's back in college

hopes to turn her BA and certificate in gerontology into a job with seniors. "The gerontology program looks at aging from all sides," Clark explains, "and it also involves practical work." Last year, she did her practical work at Camp Hill Hospital, and over the past academic year she has pro-

duced and been host of a TV program for seniors, *Seniors in Action*, on Channel 10.

Like O'Connor, Clark took some courses through correspondence from Mount A. She worked as a nurse-secretary, and later owned and ran a crafts store in Big Bras d'Or for 12 years. She

went to Mount Saint Vincent after the death of her husband. "My first year, I took on the job of don at Assisi Hall," she says. "Looking after 140 girls helped me through the grieving experience."

"The people who study after 60 are the kind of people who would have gone to university if they'd had the chance," says Joyce Kennedy, assistant director of continuing education at the Mount. "The spark for many of them is that their children and grandchildren go to university, so they complete the family tradition from the other end."

The Mount, along with Saint Mary's and Dalhousie, waives tuition fees for the over-60s, AST for the over-65s, while the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design charges half fees for the over-65s in the regular undergraduate program. Unlike other colleges, the Mount actively encourages seniors to attend university. This year, about 35 seniors are studying there full- or part-time for credit and non-credit courses.

Is it harder to learn as you get older?

Wayne Mitic of Dalhousie's health education division believes that retaining learning ability is the result of a self-fulfilling prophecy. "If you believe you are able to learn, you will; but if you go into it afraid that because you are getting older, your learning ability is diminishing, it will." The key to retaining this ability is "to maintain a stimulating environment."

Aging, of course, brings

physiological changes that can cause problems. Some, such as vision and hearing impairment, can be controlled; others, people simply have to adjust to. For example, short-term memory becomes less efficient. Joe O'Connor says: "I have to read something over several times to fix it in my mind." Reaction time slows down, too. This is one reason traditional intelligence tests are a poor gauge of seniors' mental ability. Even intelligence tests developed specifically to measure adults' intelligence can result in faulty comparisons. The problem, Mitic points out, "is that we give the same test to a 20-year-old and a 70-year-old. Instead we should be testing the same person at 20 and 70." Where such testing has been carried out, results indicate that adults can retain intellectual ability even into their 90s, providing they don't become ill.

However, even in healthy adults, mental functioning can be affected by some prescription drugs. There's a tendency, Mitic says, for

doctors to prescribe drugs for complaints such as insomnia and tension, blaming the problems on old age. "Exercise," he points out, "has been called the natural tranquilizer. Anyone who exercises regularly should be able to cope with stress."

When Margaret Snyder saw the benefits of even the mild exercise and mental stimulation she was providing for seniors at a nursing home she was inspired to embark on her bachelor's degree in recreation at Dalhousie. "I decided I wanted to set up pre-retirement programs," says this lively woman in her mid-60s. "You don't stop growing and developing, just because you've reached 60 or 65, but there are many people arriving at 60 and 65 with no tools to go on developing."

Like O'Connor, Snyder finds that "I have to read something over and over again." She started off with a course in study skills, which she recommends highly for anyone returning to study after many years' absence. And she feels it's

important for older students to have a goal. "You have to have a focus, to know what you're studying for, a reason for doing all that work."

For Claire Walters, however, the pleasure of studying a subject that interests her is sufficient motivation. "I left school in 1934, during the Depression," she says, "and there was no chance of going to college unless you were in the upper economic echelons." For her political science course at Saint Mary's, she's done the class assignments and written the exam, even though, as an auditing student, she didn't have to.

How do seniors get along with the other students?

O'Connor felt a distance between himself and the younger students when he started at Saint Mary's, but when one of the professors had a social evening and asked students to wear a label saying how they felt, "I wrote on my label: 'I feel awkward among so many young people.' The students came up to me and told me I shouldn't feel like that,

and I don't anymore." Margaret Snyder finds herself regarded as a mother figure, "or maybe I should say a grandmother figure."

Lesley Choyce, who teaches creative writing at Mount Saint Vincent, was amused by the reaction of a young student in his class after she'd listened to a woman in her 60s read out her class assignment. "My God!" the girl exclaimed, "she used a four-letter word." For her part, the older woman frequently expressed amazement and delight at the seriousness of purpose revealed by the young students in their assignments. "It was a real breakdown of barriers between generations," Choyce says.

Margaret Snyder finds the most difficult thing to explain to young students is that she enjoys being in her 60s and is looking forward to being in her 70s.

"You're in the preliminaries," I tell them. "I'm in the main event."

— Pat Lotz

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This couple's got "energy, smarts, charm"

If book publishing ever takes off here, place a bet on Carolyn MacGregor and James Lorimer

By Harry Bruce

ATORONTO woman who knew publisher James Lorimer in his most influential and controversial years there marvels that since he moved to Halifax and married Carolyn MacGregor "he has actually become nice." Some Torontonians might find this scarcely believable. In the mid-Seventies, while still in his early 30s, Lorimer was president of the Association of Canadian Publishers and chairman of the Toronto Public Library; and if one were to believe enemies he made in both organizations, he was satanic. At the library, an ex-trustee recalled, he was "unbelievably Machiavellian." Moreover there's a story, perhaps apocryphal, that Jack McClelland of McClelland & Stewart was once one of several publishers who refused to enter a room if Lorimer was in it, and that they only became amicable after discovering they both disliked a third person even more than they disliked each other.

That story may say more about backbiting in Canadian publishing, a small pond with fierce frogs, than about either Lorimer or McClelland; but in any event, Lorimer was, as *Saturday Night* editor Robert Fulford recently put it, "intensely involved in the Byzantine politics of the Canadian book-publishing business." Fulford talked about Lorimer's skills as a committee man, his staying power and organizing talents, his reputation for ruthlessness and backroom manipulation, his ability to command loyalty, and how he managed to lever himself from the limited base of a small publishing house into "an incredible amount of power. In the tiny politics of the book-publishing world, he became all-powerful."

Colombo's Canadian References (1976) called Lorimer "a radical nationalist." A woman who briefly worked for him in the early Seventies, and disliked the experience ("I'm not used to being oppressed that way"), acknowledged that he was "a fascinating person.... He used to just hammer the heck out of the multinationals." He was an articulate foe of things that greedy

development corporations inflicted on cities and a champion of Toronto's somewhat revolutionary neighborhood movement, but "he wasn't a grassroots kind of guy at all. He was a strange kind of elitist who'd taken on this fierce struggle. He was tough, and he was uncompromising." He was so close to John Sewell, the most unconventional mayor (1978-80) in Toronto history, that some regarded him as Sewell's political guru. Neither man liked this theory.

Born in Regina, Lorimer got his BA from the University of Manitoba, then a

called him "nice."

Late in the decade, he began to pop up in Halifax to lecture at the Dalhousie schools of law and library services, and in the summer of '81 he married Carolyn MacGregor, ex-wife of a Halifax doctor. The ceremony occurred at a little church in Weymouth, where Carolyn had grown up, and the wedding party was an outdoor dinner at Digby Pines hotel. It was, by all accounts, a memorable bash. Guests included MacGregor's Halifax friends, Lorimer's relatives from western Canada, and Toronto friends, in-



Lorimer and MacGregor: Helping Maritime book publishing take off

PhD from the London School of Economics. He popped up in Toronto as an economics professor in 1967 and by 1969, still only 26, he was not only a city hall columnist for *The Globe and Mail* but also an *enfant terrible* of Canadian book publishing. Throughout much of the Seventies, Torontonians who cared about books and city politics knew Lorimer's name almost as well as hockey fans now know Gretzky's. But few

including Sewell, author Marian Engel and other writers. "It was a fabulous dinner," a Halifax woman recalled.

"Half the people there made speeches. The visitors got a real dose of Nova Scotian oratory, but I think some of them had come all that way just to get a look at the woman who'd landed Jim."

When MacGregor married Lorimer, she also married the book business. Just over a year ago they bought the wreck-

age of the financially stricken Formac Publishing Co. Ltd., Antigonish, and moved its assets to Halifax. The assets were "a garageful" of unsold books and now, when it's springtime in the Valley, MacGregor jams her stationwagon with hundreds of paperbacks, and then heads for the hills on a breezy sales blitz of shopkeepers round the Maritimes. She is tall, handsome, talkative. Her smile could melt icebergs, and perhaps even a bookstore owner's steely resolve to order no more copies of *Hollytales to Warm Your Dreams, Where Broad Atlantic Surges Roll or Death Can Be Beautiful*. (Actually, if truth be told, not even MacGregor has yet managed to sell a copy of *Death Can Be Beautiful*.)

The Formac list of nearly 30 titles reflects former publisher Carroll MacIntyre's interest in eastern Nova Scotia but reveals no publishing philosophy. It has a haphazard quality. Thus, MacGregor's stationwagon might contain cartons not only of such local favorites as *History of Antigonish County*, *The Irish in Cape Breton*, *Mabou Pioneers* and *The Guysboro Railway*, but also such province-wide standards as *Folklore of Nova Scotia* and *Highland Heart in Nova Scotia*. For the South Shore, she offers *Captain William Kidd*, *Scapegoat or Scoundrel*; for visitors to the Cabot Trail, booklets on birds and hikes in Cape Breton Highlands National Park; for students of NDP backbiting, *The Akerman Years* by Paul MacEwan. Like

a 19th-century dry-goods drummer, MacGregor's got a little something for everybody.

She visits not just year-round bookstores, but also stationery shops, hotels, drugstores, and craft and gift shops that open only in summer. Moreover, thanks to a shrewd move by Lorimer, she has more than just Formac's whimsical list to flog. He's the founder of Goodread Biographies, a Formac program to issue paperback reprints of hardcover books about Canadians at reasonable prices (\$3.95, \$4.95, \$5.95). When MacGregor goes to Prince Edward Island, she'll sell the Goodread edition of Mollie Gillen's *The Wheel of Things: Lucy Maud Montgomery*. In New Brunswick, she'll sell Ray Fraser's *The Fighting Fisherman: Yvon Durelle*. Indeed, come spring, she'll have nearly 40 Goodread books to offer.

They'll include volumes about E.P. Taylor, Louis Riel, Stephen Leacock, Tommy Douglas, Punch Imlach, Wilder Penfield, Henry Morgentaler, Hugh MacLennan, Raymond Massey, about lives spent behind bars, years spent behind barbed wire, about espionage, the Arctic, and the Second World War. Along with Gillen's book on Lucy Maud Montgomery, an early best-seller in the Goodread series was Douglas Harvey's racy recollections of a Canadian bomber crew, *Boys, Bombs and Brussels Sprouts*. Goodread has what a TV football commentator might call

"good speed." Lorimer came up with the idea only last year. By October, there were 23 Goodread books in print; this spring there'll be 16 more.

Lorimer, moreover, is still a partner in James Lorimer & Company (the other partner is Catherine Wilson, Toronto), publisher of kids' books, cookbooks, and books about Canada's politics, economy, history and problems. Two of the company's current successes are Heather Robertson's *Willie*, fiction built round the life of William Lyon MacKenzie King, and *Voyage of the Iceberg* by government scientist Richard Brown of Dartmouth (see Environment, February). James Lorimer & Company, however, is primarily an issue-oriented press. For every *Mennonite Furniture*, *Billy Higgins Rides the Freights* or *Apples, Peaches & Pears* that it publishes, it also publishes a *Beyond the Monetarists*, a *Canada's Crippled Dollar*, an *Anatomy of Big Business*.

The company's authors include a passel of pros and, naturally, Lorimer himself. With six titles, he leads the pack. His first book, *The Real World of City Politics*, appeared in 1970, shortly after he founded his publishing house. He also wrote *A Citizen's Guide to City Politics* (1972), and *The Developers* (1978), perhaps his best book. With MacGregor, he later edited *After the Developers*.

They run Formac from cramped quarters in an elderly building on Bar-



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rington Street. Their office looks as though someone has opened a window to welcome a blizzard off the harbor, but they seem not only to know what they're doing but also to like what they're doing. They have the manner of happy builders.

Lorimer may well know more about the book-reading habits of English-speaking Canadians than anyone else in the country. He was the principal researcher for *Book Reading in Canada* (1983), commissioned by the Association of Canadian Publishers, funded by the federal Department of Communications, and based on what he described as "an enormous collection of data on book reading gathered in a survey of 16,000 randomly selected Canadians by Statistics Canada." He decided, "the survey data indicate how dramatically successful Canadian books now are with the public in this country." But he also deduced from the survey that there was a market for affordable paperbacks about Canadians, and his insight led to Goodread Biographies.

If he's the expert on national book-buying habits, it's MacGregor's sorties that teach them about selling books in a region with a scattered population and few bookstores. Formac was doomed before they took it over but, he says, her sales effort on its behalf is "a wonderful opportunity to find out — on the basis of someone else's failure — how to succeed." How to succeed as an Atlantic Canadian publisher may well lie in marrying trade publishing to educational publishing; and Formac, with allies in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, already has plans in that regard. If Maritime book publishing ever does take off, MacGregor and Lorimer will be part of it. They have energy, enthusiasm, smarts and, yes, charm. He doesn't seem at all fiendish these days. Indeed, he gives every appearance of being, well, *nice*. **C**

CITYFORUM

Have martini, will visit

As a longtime martini addict, I confirm The Guzzler's high rating for Henry House and La Scala. ("I Must Get Out of These Wet Clothes and into a Dry Martini", *CityStyle*, January). I haven't tried the Newsroom or Teddy's but I can recommend the Dresden Arms. For out of town expertise, I give high marks to the Heather at Stellarton and the lounge at the Sydney airport and the Rope Loft, Chester. Since reading your article, I have tried washing ice cubes in vermouth and adding a drop of scotch, both of which seem to enhance the flavor. I recall Somerset Maugham (I

believe in *Summing Up*) recounting a ritual followed when he lived on the Riviera. Finding that most of his hosts and hostesses couldn't make a good martini, he always took his own in a small jar when he was invited out. He said that he felt his added enjoyment outweighed any embarrassment or injured feelings on their part. I have followed this practice with some local neighbors who, being mostly scotch and rum drinkers, don't take me seriously when I produce my jar of martini so I don't offer to share the contents.

Keith Eaton
Chester Basin, N.S.

No seasoning in this café

After reading your article *A Café for All Seasons* in the December issue of *CityStyle*, I felt compelled to air my concern about the lack of decent restaurants in this city. I have been to Le Bistro on three different occasions, all of them with friends. Each time I found the food and service consistently poor; in fact, I felt I shouldn't have paid. The waitresses were slow — almost incompetent. The menu items ordered were presented well, but had little or no flavor: The steamed mus-

sels were gritty; the chicken crêpe, which certainly had potential with almonds and oranges, lacked any hint of spice; the hamburger was absolutely bland; and the escargot was the worst I've ever tasted. I did in fact complain at the time of our last visit, but I got no satisfaction. The waitress shrugged her shoulders, walked away and left me in mid-sentence. The review seems to place all the emphasis on the decor, the waitress with the long brown ponytail (what has hair got to do with the review anyway?) and details of their uniform. Who cares about the fact that you get "your very own candle, melted into layers of what looks like a galactic ice castle, in its very own small Perrier bottle"? Restaurants have been putting candles into empty bottles for years; it's cheap. You even admit that the food is consistently good, not great, that you have to give specific orders in order to be served hot soup, but over-all, the review tends to give Le Bistro a high rating. As long as reviews like the one mentioned above continue to be published, the general public of Halifax will continue to be brainwashed into believing that restaurants like Le Bistro are above average in service, food selection and atmosphere/decors.

R. McLeod
Halifax, N.S.

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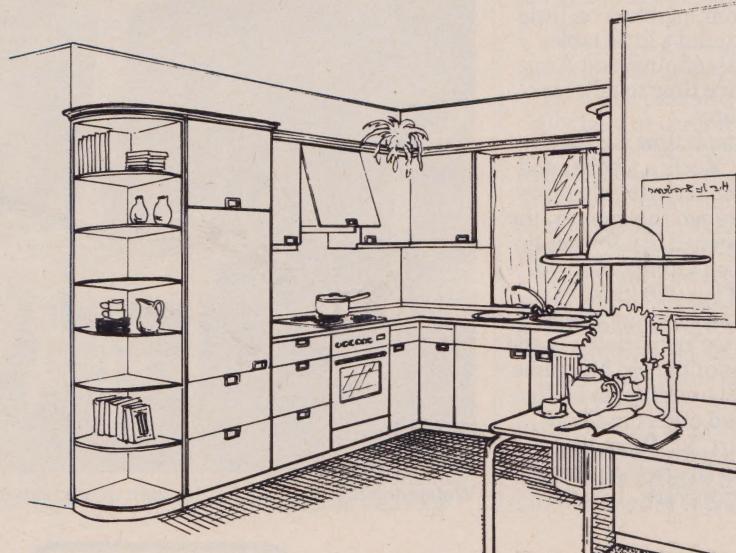
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The little kids' place that grew

Sixteen years old this month, St. Joseph's Children's Centre is the largest day-care facility in metro and a fun place for kids to be

By Marilyn MacDonald

It's just after 1 p.m., nap-time at St. Joseph's Children's Centre on Hollis Street. In the darkened room, some kids are sound asleep, curled up on mats on the floor. A few are awake. A recorded male voice, telling a story, is a soothing background to their chatter and to the slumber of other little ones. The room smells of kids, a blended diffusion of milk, hair and sticky fingers.

In a brightly lit room outside, whose visual focus is the cage-like remnant of the building's antiquated elevator, an eager little boy named Justin is making peanut butter balls, helped by a dark-haired young teacher. You couldn't call the room cosy. But it's cheerful in spite of itself, gay with pictures, blocks, kids' gear. Lofts with small tables and chairs stretch around the room. And in another room, perched on little chairs around a little table, Sue Wolstenholme and Anna Keefe have time to talk for a few minutes.

Wolstenholme is executive director, Keefe a teacher and lecturer at St. Joseph's. Sixteen years ago this month, the Centre opened in a former orphanage on Quinpool Road. Today, it has 250 kids, 36 teachers and four locations: The one we're in, down in the basement of the old Maritime Tel & Tel building on Hollis Street, and others in Quinpool Court, St. Patrick's School on Brunswick Street and Clayton Park. It is the

largest day care centre in Metro and the second oldest. (Only the Jost Mission, founded in the 1920s, is more venerable.) It also operates its own 10-month training course for 35 students and provides a place where 15 more student teachers from the Nova Scotia Teachers College's two-year course and Mount Saint Vincent University's four-year bachelor's degree program in child development can do their practical internships.

Wolstenholme and Keefe are at home with the academic language of child development: Montessori and the Waldorf method ripple off their tongues easily. Yet neither started out to become child care specialists. Wolstenholme, who comes from Moncton, got interested when her daughter, now 21, reached an age when she was "ready to go" to a day-care centre — if a good one could have been found. Keefe, of Halifax, whose sons are now 16 and 10 became involved for the same reason. Both have

added academic underpinning to natural interest since then. Wolstenholme is finishing a master's degree at Dalhousie University. Keefe picked up a degree in early childhood education from the University of Toronto.

These are not women you talk to about day care as a mere baby sitting service for busy parents. Committed in a no-nonsense, totally earnest way, they're low-key cheerleaders for the right of all children to a happy, healthy learning environment.

But why can't parents provide this?

Wolstenholme draws a clear distinction between what parents can — and should — provide and what a child care centre can contribute.

"Some people are intuitively good child rearers," she says. "Emotions, love, care, those are all part of parenting. But children have development needs too, and parents don't always know how or don't have time to

look after those things."

Kids need other kids and in today's smaller families those needs often aren't met by brothers and sisters. Over 50% of the children at St. Joseph's come from single-child homes. Pressures on parents — divorce or separation, no other kids around, the need or desire to work outside the home — all make good child care facilities "pretty important" to Wolstenholme, "especially in the era that pre-schoolers today are going to be living in."

Parents can drop children off at the Centre's locations as early as 7:30 a.m. and pick them up at 5:30 p.m. The cost per child is \$62.50 a week or \$3,000 a year which can be subsidized by the provincial government on a scale that takes into consideration such things as the size of the family, marital status of the parent and whether the parents are working. With the subsidy, the least a family could expect to pay is \$14.25 per child per week.



Wolstenholme: Cheerleader for right of all children to a happy, healthy learning environment

PHOTOS BY ALBERT LEE

Non-profit and non-denominational, St. Joseph's emphasizes the Montessori approach, a program pioneered in Italy in the early 20th century by Maria Montessori, which helps children develop learning abilities through basic skills. Mastering buttons and zippers is part of it. So is keeping clean. "Children like order," Wolstenholme says, "and they know best what they need."

This year the Centre started a new morning program at the Hollis Street location for children 2 1/2 to five years old, under Keefe's direction. Through play rather than formal teaching, she says, the program aims to bring kids in touch with "elements in their environment with which they may not be familiar."

Forays into the natural world may uncover treasures from Point Pleasant Park which kids can bring back to the Centre and arrange in their own way. Trips to the waterfront, almost at the Centre's doorstep, can mean getting the feel of everything from oil rigs and pilot boats to puddles and fog.

St. Joseph's is also in the vanguard of a much debated area: How to provide good nutrition for kids. Wolstenholme is a devout supporter of the latest theories which discourage over-use of red meats as well as fats, sugar, salt and processed foods.

Kids' lunches are prepared at the Brunswick Street centre and delivered to the other locations in a donated van driven by one of the workers. The idea is to make kids like wholesome meals and snacks by providing lots of them and prohibiting junk, both at the Centre and on any of its outings. Wolstenholme swears it works.

Staples are natural foods, whole grains, vegetables, fresh fruit and juices with no sugar added, dairy products such as



Keefe, teacher and lecturer, didn't start out to be a child care specialist

yogurt, cheese and milk.

A lunch could consist of scalloped cheese and corn, a salad combining chick peas, lima and green beans, whole wheat bread, apples and milk. Or meatballs in tomato sauce, brown rice, spinach-sprout salad, grapes and milk. Teachers and kids eat together and children often help make the snacks. The Centre even has a mimeographed booklet of sample menus and recipes and advice on where to buy ingredients.

Unlike other critics of the system, and in spite of the fact that less than 5% of the children of working parents are in licensed day care centres, Wolstenholme says she

sees "great improvement" in the province's day-care facilities. Recently, the provincial government announced it would require that one-third of the staffs of day-care centres be formally trained by 1985. Two-thirds, Wolstenholme says, is the next objective. But although that may benefit children who attend the centres, trained workers remain an unofficial subsidy to the whole system. A child care worker who graduates from St. Joseph's 10-month course, which includes training in such things as learning theories, Montessori, language, arts and music, health and safety, legal responsibilities and nutrition, can look

forward to a 40-hour-a-week job at a salary of \$11,000 a year.

The rules for granting subsidies to parents with children in day care also hit specially hard at certain income groups. For families with an annual income in the \$15,000-\$25,000 range, Wolstenholme says, "the day care cost is exorbitant." Yet, she claims to see "a very slow, slight trend" toward more government involvement in underwriting day-care costs.

There's a light snow falling out on Hollis Street and inside a sense more than a sound of things beginning to stir. Justin offers a fresh peanut butter ball. It was good.



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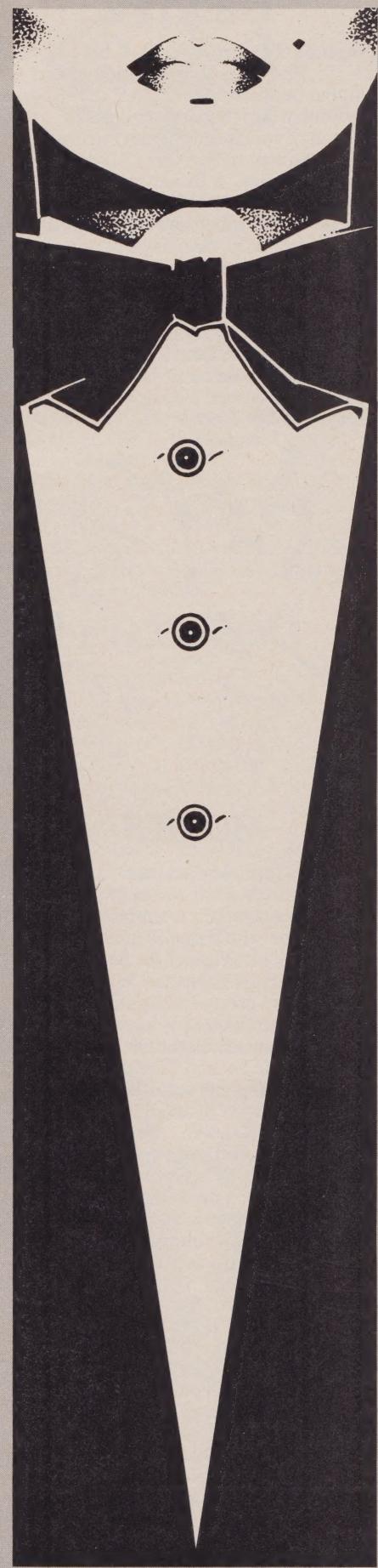
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GADABOUT

ART GALLERIES

Art Gallery of Nova Scotia. To Mar. 19, all three galleries: *Quebec Art Now* profiles 10 significant Quebec artists. Mar. 22-April 30, *Mezzanine Gallery*: An exhibition of serigraphs by Nova Scotia artist Rod Malay. Second Floor Gallery: A retrospective of Queen's County, Nova Scotia, wood carver Charlie Tanner. The exhibit will also include photographs by artist Peter Barss. 6152 Coburg Road, 424-7542. Hours: Mon., Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat., 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m.; Thurs., 10 a.m.-9 p.m.; Sun., 12-5:30 p.m.

Mount Saint Vincent University Gallery. To Mar. 8, Downstairs: *Shipibo-Central American*. This is an exhibition of works by the Upper Amazon tribe, the Shipibo, put together by James Felter, director of the Simon Fraser University Art Gallery in British Columbia. Upstairs: *James Felter*. This show features works by Felter, who uses the geometry and design of the Shipibo. Mar. 15-April 8, Downstairs: *The Cult of the Personality* is an exhibit of portraits by Toronto artist Lynn Donoghue. Upstairs: The Gallery's exhibitions officer, Sandy Miller, has put together *Rags*, an exhibition featuring fabrics and clothing by Nova Scotia designers. Bedford Highway, 443-4450. Hours: Mon.-Fri., 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Tues., till 9 p.m.; Sat. & Sun. 12-5 p.m.

Dalhousie Art Gallery. Mar. 1-April 8: *The 7th Dalhousie Drawing Exhibition: Actual Size*. This is an exhibition of contemporary work by seven Canadian and American artists, guest-curated by Robert Berlind. The artists are Mira Schor, William Tucker, Richards Jarden, John McEwen, Paterson Ewen, Eric Fischl and Medrie MacPhee. *Sobey Collections: Part V*: The final exhibit in this series features the work of three Canadian landscape painters, Emily Carr, James Morrice and David Milne. Dalhousie campus, 424-2403. Hours: Tues., 11 a.m.-5 p.m., 7-10 p.m.; Wed.-Fri., 1-5 p.m.; Sat. & Sun., 2-4 p.m.

Saint Mary's University Art Gallery. To Mar. 18: An exhibition of paintings by Austrian-born artist Edgar Neogy-Tezak. Mar. 28-April 19: *Reading Room*. This exhibit by Bruce Barber deals with advocacy advertising. SMU campus, 429-9780. Hours: Tues., Wed., Thurs., 1-7 p.m.; Fri., 1-5 p.m.; Sat. & Sun., 2-4 p.m.

Anna Leonowens Gallery (N.S. Col-

lege of Art and Design).

To Mar. 16, *Gallery One*: An exhibition of paintings by British feminist artist Margaret Harrison. Mar. 5-10, *Gallery Two*: Students' print-making exhibit. *Gallery Three*: Tom Folland exhibition (Opening, Mar. 5, 8 p.m.). Mar. 12-17, *Gallery Two*: John Greer sculptures exhibit. *Gallery Three*: Gary Kennedy's studio class show (Opening, Mar. 12, 8 p.m.). Mar. 19-31, *Gallery One*: Photos from the collection of Frances Coutelier. Mar. 19-24, *Gallery Two*: *MacBeth* posters exhibit by the Visual Communications class. *Gallery Three*: Genny Killin and Darlene Levy paintings exhibition (Opening, Mar. 19, 8 p.m.). Mar. 26-31, *Galleries Two and Three*: Robert Moore's MFA exhibit. 1889 Granville Street, 422-7381. Hours: Tues.-Sat., 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; Thurs., 5-9 p.m.

Centre for Art Tapes. To Mar. 10: *The 5th Annual Audio by Artists Festival*. The festival, held in conjunction with the Eye Level Gallery, features performances by various artists. Mar. 3: Composer-performers Steve Tittle and Richard Gibson. Mar. 4: Clancy Dennehy and Don Lander, and Mark Clifford and Beth Bartley perform duets. Mar. 9: Ihor Holubinsky and *The Palace at 4 a.m.* For locations, call the Centre for Art Tapes, 429-7299, or Eye Level Gallery, 425-6412. Also, Mar. 28: An exhibit of audio installations, or sound sculptures. CFAT, 2156 Brunswick Street.

Eye Level Gallery. Mar. 1: John Murdoch discusses American composer Charles Ives. Mar. 27: A display of artist-produced records and tapes from the N.S. College of Art and Design. 1585 Barrington Street.

CLUB DATES

The Ice House Lounge, 300 Prince Albert Road, Dartmouth. To Mar. 3: *Riser*. Mar. 5-10: *Mad Hash*. Mar. 12-17: TBA. Mar. 19-24: *Tense*. Hours: Mon.-Fri., 11:30 a.m.-2 a.m., Sat., 5 p.m.-2 a.m.

Little Nashville, 44 Alderney Drive, Dartmouth. All country. To Mar. 4: *Whiskey Fever*. Mar. 5-11: *Dynasty*. Mar. 12-18: *Morn'n Sun*. Mar. 19-25: *Gold Strikers*. Mar. 26-April 1: *County Line* with Eric McRoberts. Hours: Every night, 9 p.m.-3 a.m.

Lord Nelson Beverage Room, 5675 Spring Garden Road. To Mar. 3: *Driftwood*. Mar. 5-10: *McGinty*. Mar. 12-17:



Miller's Jug. Mar. 19-24: *McGinty*. Mar. 26-31: *Garrison Brothers*. Hours: Mon.-Wed., 11 a.m.-11 p.m.; Thurs.-Sat., 11 a.m.-12 p.m. **The Network Lounge**, 1546 Dresden Row. To Mar. 3: *Fat Shadow*. Mar. 5-10: *Lightening Rod*. Mar. 12-14: *The Business*. Mar. 15-17: *Quadrant*. Mar. 19-24: *The White*. Mar. 26-28: *The X-Men*. Mar. 29-31: *Deverau*. Hours: Mon.-Sat., 12 p.m.-2 a.m. **Peddlar's Pub**, Lower level of Delta Barrington Hotel. To Mar. 3: *Arma-geddon*. Mar. 5-10: *Vendetta*. Mar. 12-17: *Rox*. Mar. 19-24: *The Aviators*. Mar. 26-31: *Mainstreet*. Hours: Mon.-Wed., 11 a.m.-11 p.m.; Thurs.-Sat., 11 a.m.-12 p.m. **Privateers' Warehouse**, Historic pro-

perties. Middle Deck, Mar. 5-10, 12-17: *Mason Chapman Band*. Mar. 19-24; 26-31: *The Backbeats*. Hours: Lower Deck, Mon.-Wed., 11:30 a.m.-11 p.m.; Thurs.-Sat., 11:30-12 a.m. Middle Deck, 11:30-2:30 a.m. **Teddy's**, piano bar at Delta Barrington Hotel. To Mar. 31: George Johnston. Hours: Mon.-Sat., 9-1 a.m. Happy hour, 5-7 p.m. **The Village Gate**, 534 Windmill Road, Dartmouth. To Mar. 3: *Vendetta*. Mar. 8-10: *Intro*. Mar. 15-17: Bryan Jones. Mar. 22-24: *Mainstreet*. Mar. 29-31: *Tense*. Hours: Mon.-Wed., 10 a.m.-11 p.m.; Thurs.-Sat., 10-12:30 a.m.

MUSEUMS

Dartmouth Heritage Museum. In the Gallery, to Mar. 12: An exhibit of works by Bernadette Vincent, Dartmouth. Mar. 12-April 1: Works by Sackville photographer John Betlem. 100 Wyse Road, 421-2300. Hours: Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri., Sat., 1-5 p.m.; Wed., 1-5 p.m. & 6-9 p.m.; Sun., 2-5 p.m. **Nova Scotia Museum.** To Mar. 25: *The Creative Tradition: Indian Handicrafts and the Tourist Arts*. This travelling exhibit from the Provincial Museum of Alberta shows how the art and tools of the Indians of the subarctic and northern plains changed when they came in contact with European materials and culture. 1747 Summer St., 429-4610.

THEATRE
Neptune Theatre. Mar. 1-4, 6-11, 13-18: *Mass Appeal*. The head to heart combat between Father Tim, a traditional parish priest, and Mark Dolson, a young seminarian burning with idealism, makes this a hilarious and passionate play. A Broadway hit by Bill C. Davis. March 30, 31: *Present Laughter*. Described as Noel Coward's greatest comedy, this play was just recently revived on Broadway. Garry Essendine, a popular and pampered actor whose life is continually complicated by his many admirers, is in hot water when the many women from his past, present and future appear on the scene. 1593 Argyle Street. For tickets and times, call 429-7300.



MOVIES

Rebecca Cohn Auditorium. Dalhousie Arts Centre. Mar. 4: *Prince of the City*, David Cronenberg's relentless and terrifying movie with Treat Williams. 1982. Mar. 11: *Night of the Shooting Stars*. Directors Paolo and Vittorio Taviani have created a haunting film about the mischances of a group of Italian peasants fleeing their village at the end of the Second World War. 1982, Italian with English subtitles. Mar. 18: *Return of Martin Guerre*. This winner of three French Academy Awards is the true story of a 16th century boy who disappears shortly after his marriage to the daughter of a prominent villager and the birth of their son, and then returns a changed man. The question of his identity ended in a court case that scandalized France. Directed by Daniel Vigne. 1983, French with English subtitles. Mar. 25: *The Sailor Who Fell from Grace with the Sea*. Director Lewis John Carlin's masterful adaptation of Mishima's novel in which a man betrays his soul for the love of a woman, and must pay the price, is a passionate study of self-deception. Stars Kris Kristofferson and Sarah Miles, 1976. **Wormwood's Dog and Monkey Cinema.** 1588 Barrington St., Bean Sprout Bldg. Mar. 2-4: *Tout Une Nuit*. An experimental film by leading



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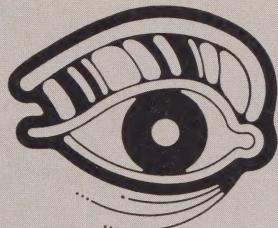
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feminist filmmaker Chantal Ackerman. Mar. 5, 6: *Cabiria*, the first great silent film epic. Mar. 7, 8: *In Celebration of Women*. In recognition of International Women's Day, the Cinema is holding two days of films devoted to women's issues. Mar. 9-11: *Citizen Kane*. Director Orson Welles' classic. Mar. 12-18: *1983 Cannes/Venice Advertising Awards*. The world's best commercials. Mar. 19-22: *Gone With the Wind*. Gable and Leigh star in this beloved adaptation of Margaret Mitchell's novel. Mar. 23-29: *From Russia with Love* and *Goldfinger*. A James Bond double bill. Mar. 30-April 5: *Danton*. A study of the French Revolution by renowned Polish director Andrzej Wajda. For tickets and times, call 422-3700.

IN CONCERT

Symphony Nova Scotia. Main Series — Mar. 6: All Beethoven program. Mar. 31: TBA. Pops Series — Mar. 23: The Symphony performs with award-winning Canadian composer, arranger and pianist, Hagood Hardy. Rebecca Cohn Auditorium. For tickets and times, call 421-7311.

Halifax Chamber Musicians. Mar. 4: The group presents Mozart, Sonata in B flat major for violin and piano; Glick, Suite Hebraique for clarinet, string trio and piano; Prokofiev, Overture on Hebrew Themes for clarinet, piano and string quartet; Shostakovich, Piano quintet in G minor. 8 p.m., Saint Mary's University Art Gallery, SMU campus. For information, call 429-9780.



Dalhousie Chorale. Mar. 21: The Chorale's annual oratorio performance this year features Handel's epic oratorio *Israel in Egypt*. The 140-voice choir will sing under the direction of Dr. Walter Kemp and will be accompanied by the Dalhousie Chamber Orchestra. 8 p.m., St. Paul's Church, Grand Parade. For information, call Dalhousie Department of Music, 424-2418.

Dalhousie Chamber Choir. Mar. 24: Melva Treffinger Graham conducts this award-winning 25-voice choir at the first Baptist Church, 1300 Oxford Street. The Acadia Vocal Ensemble will also perform. For information, call 424-2418.

Sequentia. Mar. 9: This Boston-based early music group performs their *Love and Lamentation in Mediaeval France* program. The works, circa 1200, include pieces from the world of the trouvères, the clerics and intellectuals of Parisian university and cathedral circles; death laments (planctus) for princes; Abelard's masterpiece, *David's Lament on the Deaths of Saul and Jonathon* (from a manuscript in the Vatican library); political invective from court and church; and music of the Parisian minstrels. 8 p.m., Canadian Martyrs' Church, 5900 Inglis St. For information, call, 429-5610.



Dalhousie Arts Centre. Appearing in the Rebecca Cohn Auditorium, Mar. 9: Lona Boyd, Canada's acclaimed classical guitarist. Mar. 14: The *Elmer Iseler Singers*, choral music. Mar. 16, 17: André Gagnon. This dazzling Canadian pianist pleases classical and pop fans alike. Mar. 21: *The Chieftains*, traditional Irish music group. Mar. 24: Stan Getz, jazz musician. Mar. 29: Rita MacNeil. This Cape Breton native performs powerful folk music. Mar. 30: Carlos Montoya, flamenco guitarist. All performances at 8 p.m. For information, call 242-2298.

PLUS...

Atlantic Ballet Company. Mar. 1, 2: The company performs at the Dalhousie Arts Centre. For information, call 425-8848.

Ice Capades. Mar. 6-11: This popular skating troupe performs at the Metro Centre, 5284 Duke Street. For information, call 421-8000.

Halcon 7. Mar. 9-11: Atlantic Canada's only major science fiction and fantasy conference features S-F writers C.J. Cherryh and Elizabeth Pearse, and includes an art show, auction, banquet and dance. Toastmaster is Hal Clement. For information, call 443-8478.

SPORTS

Hockey. Mar.: Metro Valley Junior, Nova Scotia Senior, and Triple A Midget playoffs. Mar. 12, 13, 14: Dartmouth Minor Hockey tournament. Mar. 15, 16: Cole Harbour/Bel Ayr Hockey tournament. Dartmouth Sportsplex, 110 Wyse Road. For information call, 421-2600.

Broomball. Mar. 30-Apr. 1: Atlantic Broomball Championships. Dartmouth Sportsplex. For information, call Sport Nova Scotia, 425-5450.

Squash. Mar. 2-4: Burnside Athletic Club Invitational. 30 Akerley Blvd., Dartmouth. For information, call 425-5450.



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